

OLC 72-0291
7 March 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Conversation with Ed Braswell, Chief Counsel, Senate Armed Services Committee, re Department of Defense Testimony on Funding of Irregulars in Laos

1. Talked to Ed Braswell who said at this morning's appearance of Assistant Secretary of Defense (ISA) G. Warren Nutter regarding the Defense Procurement Authorization bill Defense witnesses conceded that there was no legal obstacle to their paying the irregulars in Laos, but it was a "policy" matter. Chairman Stennis commented that he suspected that "there was more to it than this." Braswell said Stennis feels strongly that Defense or State should handle the transfer of these funds and the job should be taken out of CIA's hands. Braswell wants to talk with Agency representatives in the next few days to see how this can be done. He spoke of the possibility of passing the funds from Defense to the ambassador or AID and having them pass the funds on to the ultimate recipients by some local arrangements not dependent on CIA.

2. Braswell said the transcript would be available tomorrow and he would be glad to show it to us off the record. I told him we would welcome an opportunity to examine it.

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3. In a separate conversation John Goldsmith, of the Committee staff, told [redacted] that Bill Sullivan was asked if it would be possible to give the money for the irregular forces to State Department which could have the ambassador give the money to a member of the country team for payment to the Lao [redacted] forces. Sullivan said this amounted to a new proposition as far as he was concerned and he would like to give the matter some thought and provide a written response.

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Distribution:
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